

single, the girl is allowed some freedom; she has more time at her disposal, she can go about with her friends, attend parties, etc. When married, the cares of her new position, the necessity of harder work for her new family and her altered position amongst people who are strangers to her and who look upon her as an intruder—all these reasons keep her in the house, and her time for social recreation is past. Therefore girlhood is considered the golden time in the life of a young woman, and a girl looks with dread and apprehension upon her approaching marriage; but on the other hand, love prompts her to join her husband and she hopes that his love will compensate her for what she will have to endure. In this way there is a mixture of grief and joy in the whole ceremony.

The weddings are nearly all held in the late fall or winter, when the field work is over for the year, the harvest sold and the family knows how much money it can afford to spend. When the old people have decided that their child shall marry, they ask him or her whom he or she likes best and whom next best. Marriage, it must be remembered, is often a business matter; there must be a wedding and at the chosen period. In fact, a marriage at any other time of the year is an exception. In this way it comes about that all the marriageable girls in the village are expecting their offers to come during the same week in the fall or winter, and are ready for them.

The room is cleaned and lighted up every night, the old people and the girl stay at home, while the smaller children run about the village, looking into the windows to find out how things are going on in their neighbors' houses.

The preliminaries are usually arranged between the two families, the marriage being really more the affair of these, than of the two young people themselves, since it is in fact the giving up of a working-hand by one family and her adoption into another one. The arrangements are made by friends or go-betweens. It is customary that a female relation of the groom goes to ask for the hand of the girl, and is then called a *svakha*. With her goes some old male relation or friend, who knows all the necessary forms of ceremony and is a persuasive talker; he is

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